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NDP still 'new' as time runs out on name change talk

POLITICS In the end, they simply ran out of time.

New Democrats ended their weekend convention in Halifax yesterday without debating a contentious item on the agenda: Whether or not to change the party's name. Some had argued that after 48 years, it was time for the "New" in the party's name to go.

A resolution to hold consultations on a potential name change was expected to be voted on yesterday, the final day of the convention, but the clock ran out.

That did not sit well with some, who say that delegates opposed to even discussing the name change ragged the puck long enough to avoid what could have been a divisive debate.

NDP Leader Jack Layton said the delegates obviously felt there were more important issues to discuss, but NDP MP Joe Comartin (Windsor-Tecumseh) said there "clearly was a concerted effort" to talk out the clock so it never came up for debate.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

ShareYourViews
ottawaletters@metronews.ca

Going Green pg 8

Nature makes own hybrids

Celebrity Buzz pg 14

Jen gets her workouts in

Mayors get one-on-one time

Municipal conference this week gives civic leaders 'direct pipeline' to ministers

TIM WIECLAWSKI
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Sometimes, a little face time can go a long way.

That's why more than 1,600 elected officials from over 300 municipalities across the province are in Ottawa this week for the Association of Municipalities of Ontario's annual conference.

The three-day conference will feature guest speakers such as Premier Dalton McGuinty, federal Minister of Transport, Infrastructure and Communities John Baird, Senator Pamela Wallin, Deputy Premier and Ontario Minister of Energy and Infrastructure George Smitherman, Ontario Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing Jim Watson, Ontario Progressive Conservative Leader Tim Hudak and Ontario NDP Leader Andrea Horwath. More than 15 federal and provincial ministers or their representatives will also attend.

Thunder Bay Mayor Lynn Peterson said one of the benefits of attending the conference is being able to speak face-to-face with several ministers in a short period of time rather than making multiple trips over several months.

"You get to see them all over the course of a couple days," she said. "It's a direct pipeline and it has so much value for the community."

For many mayors of smaller or more remote municipalities, a face-to-face meeting with federal and provincial ministers is costly and very time consuming.

Local boost

- This is the fourth consecutive year the AMO annual conference has been held in Ottawa and Alta Vista Coun. Peter Hume said it injects an estimated $5 million into the economy while providing local councillors face time with provincial ministers.

Alta Vista Coun. Peter Hume, who is also AMO president, said "We're certainly going to be talking about the economic situation we find ourselves in and how municipalities are faring with the infrastructure stimulus that we've been receiving."

While massive infrastructure investments have reaped benefits, Hume said it was time to turn the human costs of the recession.

Peterson said there is also opportunity to share best practices and attend panel discussions on the "important things that make communities," like sewer infrastructure, recreation and health care.

Record smashed

Lightning Bolt

DOMINIC EBENBICHLER/REUTERS

Usain Bolt of Jamaica sprints to the finish to win in the men's 100-metre final during the world athletics championships at the Olympic stadium yesterday in Berlin. Bolt took a staggering 0.11 seconds off his own world record to finish the race in 9.58 seconds. The 100-metre record usually comes down by one or two hundredths of a second at a time, making the bite Bolt took out of it astonishing. American Tyson Gay, the 2007 world champion, ran the race of his life to finish second in 9.71, the third fastest time ever.

Packed house expected for cyclists' drive

FUNDRAISER What started out as an idea for a modest fundraising dinner for the five athletes who were hit by a van while cycling in Kanata last month has turned into one of the biggest events of the summer.

"Initially, we just wanted to have a dinner and raise maybe $4,000 to help pay to replace their bikes, and it's turned into this big cathartic night with entertainment and celebration and guest speakers," said organizer Phil Marsh, who is the area manager of the Running Room in Ottawa.

A packed house is expected tonight at the Arrow and Loon Restaurant.

Marsh expects that half of the people there tonight will have never met the injured athletes.

"It's more a matter of 'what can we do, how can we help?'"

Four of the five cyclists are expected to be at the dinner tonight and make brief speeches during dinner.

Everything from the restaurant, to the food, and the collection of items in the silent auction has been donated. All of the proceeds will be divided among the five athletes.

TIM WIECLAWSKI/METRO OTTAWA

Free Daily News Group Inc., operating as Metro Ottawa 130 Slater Street, Suite 300, Ottawa, Ontario K1P 6E2. Publisher: Bill McDonald

SuperEX singing supports sports for kids

This week at SuperEX, put your singing skills to work in support of a charity that makes sport accessible to all children. For every person who sings the famous Band-Aid-brand jingle, the company will donate a dollar to Kidsport Canada. METRO OTTAWA

Local

Police search for robbery suspects

Ottawa police are on the hunt for two male suspects after they allegedly broke into an east-end business last week. Last Tuesday, two men entered the Ritchie Feed and Seed on Windmill Lane and proceeded directly to the room containing the company safe. After being unsuccessful at opening the safe, the males made off with credit card receipts. Police are seeking two white males in their mid 20s to early 30s. METRO OTTAWA

METRO INTERNATIONAL NEWSPAPER OF THE YEAR
2009 Festival of Media Awards

News in brief

INJURY An RCMP officer based out of headquarters in Ottawa has suffered non-life-threatening injuries following the detonation of a vehicle-borne incendiary explosive device in Afghanistan. At 8:15 a.m. Afghanistan time yesterday, Sgt. Brian Kelly was injured after the incident occurred near the main entrance to the NATO International Security Assistance Force Headquarters in Kabul, an RCMP news release stated.

ROBBERY City police are investigating after a Richmond Road convenience store was robbed yesterday morning. At 2 a.m., a male held up a 7-Eleven on the 1300 block of Richmond Road. Anyone with information should call police at 613-236-1222 ext. 5116.

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

metronews.ca
What's online today.
Video Pranksters flipping over pint-sized Smart cars warned of serious consequences at **metronews.ca/canada**

Lotteries

Friday, Aug. 14
Lotto Super 7: 1, 3, 4, 10, 11, 32 & 46. Bonus 15.
Saturday, Aug. 15
Lotto 6/49: 5, 6, 15, 31, 38 & 39. Bonus 36.
Sunday, Aug. 16
Ontario Pick 3: 8 4 4; **Ontario Pick 4 :** 5 6 3 3
Encore: 6 1 3 6 3 1 3
Daily Keno: 1, 3, 5, 6, 11, 22, 35, 42, 45, 46, 48, 49, 51, 55, 56, 60, 61, 62, 63, 68
These results are not official.

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Getting away from the grind

Meditation in the Park series gives Ottawans a chance to release stress

TRACEY TONG
tracey.tong@metronews.ca

A group of Ottawans learned the secret to leaving it all behind — at least for a little while — in the serene setting of Strathcona Park yesterday.

Representatives from Ottawa Buddhist temple Hilda Jayewardenaramaya brought one of its non-denominational meditation sessions outside yesterday as a part of its second annual Meditation in the Park series.

"The park is a great place for the event," said temple spokesman Asoka Weerasinghe.

Not only does it allow people to get outside and enjoy the summer, it allows passersby to see what meditation is about, removing some of the mystique.

Orleans resident Lucie Thivierge began meditation in November "to grow personally and spiritually."

Since then, she's found that she's become "a lot calmer and a lot more in tune with things.

"I'm also letting go of non-important things," she said.

"It's a way of relaxing and releasing stress," agreed Ottawa's Debby Simpson. "It helps me deal with the things in my life. It makes me calmer and I don't get as pulled into things."

"You really do see the difference in people," said Weerasinghe.

Fourteen-year-old Genevieve Bergeron attended a session for the first time with her mother, Paula Dignan.

Dignan, who began meditating at a Buddhist temple, was glad to take meditation outside during the summer.

Meditation allows you to purge negative energy and stress, she said. "You feel more inspired, and less afraid," she said. "It gives you tools to balance your everyday life. You can take a step back and breathe a bit and understand that there's more to life than going through the grind."

Spreading the word

- The park and the temple — which holds free meditation sessions at noon on Tuesdays and Thursdays — aren't the only places people are meditating, said Asoka Weerasinghe. Last year, the group was invited to teach meditation to students in two area schools, he said. Students can really benefit from meditation, he said, adding, "It helps the concentration and we teach them that if they start now, they can learn to calm themselves in the coming years."

TRACEY TONG/METRO OTTAWA

Abbott Bhante Muditha of Ottawa Buddhist temple Hilda Jayewardenaramaya teaches a group of people the art of meditation at Strathcona Park yesterday morning.

Walk of Hope expects big year

TRACEY TONG
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CANCER With a new location and a growing number of participants, organizers of this year's Walk of Hope for Ovarian Cancer Canada are gearing up to make this one the biggest yet.

Although it's only in its sixth year in Ottawa, the event, which had 800 participants and raised more than $137,500 for ovarian cancer research, support and education last year, is the second largest in the country, said event co-chair Kerry Stewart.

It's grown so much in recent years that this Sept. 13, organizers are moving the 5K walk from Vincent Massey Park to the larger, more visible Mooney's Bay.

Visibility is a big issue for anyone working with the cause.

"Our main battle is awareness," said Stewart. "It's the most fatal gynecological cancer in Canada."

Because the disease is "not on the medical radar" and there is no screening test for ovarian cancer — most cases are found while patients are screened for other things — it's often not diagnosed until the third or fourth stage. By then, patients have a 20 per cent chance of surviving up to three years, Stewart said.

It's also becoming a young women's concern. While most of the patients are over 40, "increasingly, we're finding that younger women are diagnosed," Stewart said — in some cases as young as 12.

When the disease is detected early, patients have a 90 per cent chance of complete recovery, Stewart said. That's why Ovarian Cancer Canada — where proceeds from the walk go, along with research, support and the survivors teaching students program — offers its Listen to the Whispers awareness program.

Blazes prompt investigation

TRACEY TONG
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FIRES Firefighters and police are investigating an arson after fires started at two portables in the city's south end early yesterday morning.

Ottawa firefighters were busy overnight yesterday while fighting two fires that caused a combined $600,000 in damages.

The fire was reported at Roberta Bondar Public School at 159 Lorry Greenberg Dr. just after midnight yesterday, where two portables at the rear of the school's property were fully involved, said district chief David Thompson.

The 24 firefighters who attended brought the fire under control, but the buildings sustained about $200,000 worth of damages.

"It's a suspicious fire," said Thompson.

The fire is now under investigation.

One firefighter suffered a knee injury, was taken to hospital and later released.

An hour previous, firefighters were called to a two-storey home at 1869 Des Epinettes Ave. in the city's east end.

Forty-two firefighters attended the fire, which was fully involved upon their arrival. The fire had spread to the roof, making entry impossible.

Aboriginal dam protesters end blockade

Aboriginal protesters have ended a demonstration at the $1-billion, 200-megawatt Wuskwatim dam generating station in northern Manitoba, CBC News Online reports. Manitoba chiefs and Nisichawayisihk Cree Nation negotiated an agreement with Manitoba Hydro on hiring workers for the project. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Canada

Not out of recession yet: PM

Canada is not yet out of the recession that has gripped the world, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Friday, adding that now is not the time for opposition parties to be contemplating an election. Canadian officials are expressing caution over the economy, saying that while there are signs the worst of the recession is over, they are not declaring victory yet. REUTERS

Relations drive Arctic thaw

Quiet talks hint at resolutions despite political posturing

In the tangled world of Arctic diplomacy, where nationalist ideas converge and sometimes clash at the top of the world in Cold War fashion, not all is as it seems.

When Defence Minister Peter MacKay rebukes Russia for Arctic bomber flights and Artur Chilingarov, Russia's hardline Arctic envoy, makes clear Moscow's northern ambitions, their chest-thumping is often aimed at a home audience.

"I kind of look at Chilingarov and Peter MacKay playing a similar role in two different governments, playing to a sense of nationalism in their own country," said Michael Byers, Canadian research chair in international law and politics at the University of British Columbia.

Great expectations

- Expect Prime Minister Stephen Harper in his Arctic sojourn this week to tout his government's ambitions in the North, with big-ticket promises like a $720-million icebreaker, new patrol ships, and a new army training base and a deep-water port facility, both in Nunavut.

Expect to hear a lot more on that theme next week as Prime Minister Stephen Harper heads north for a weeklong trip that will take him to all three territories.

The trip, which starts today, will see the prime minister attend a cabinet meeting in Iqaluit as well as visit the frontlines of "Operation Nanook," a major sovereignty exercise by the Canadian Forces and other government departments.

But Byers cites two episodes in February to highlight the tangled diplomatic dance that drives Arctic politics, a mix of pubic chest-thumping and quiet backroom diplomacy.

On Feb. 18, two Russian bombers flew over the Arctic, sparking Canadian CF-18 fighters to send a "strong signal that they should back off and stay out of our airspace," MacKay said shortly after the incident.

The tough rhetoric helped portray Ottawa as a staunch defender of Canada's north.

Yet just two days after the aerial showdown, Canadian and Russian diplomats met quietly in Moscow to discuss a common approach to some of the region's most contentious issues.

Alan Kessler, legal adviser to the foreign affairs department, and Roman Kolodkin, his Russian counterpart, talked about a "joint Russian-Canada-Denmark" submission to the United Nations commission looking at government claims to the continental shelf.

Such a surprise submission could mean a negotiated resolution to tricky issues of each country's claim to the Arctic region, and with it claims to potential offshore resource treasures.

TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

Canada attempting to shrink hog production

FARMING Canada will pay some farmers to stop raising hogs and offer loans to help others restructure, assistance that drew praise from Canadian hog farmers and concerns from a top U.S. farmer group.

Agriculture Minister Gerry Ritz announced the assistance for the reeling industry Saturday.

The government will ask farmers to bid for funding totalling $75 million to stop hog production for at least three years. Farmers have complained that they lose $40 per hog they sell because of high feed costs and weak prices.

Banks will offer long-term loans at market rates backed by government credit to allow viable hog farms to restructure. Short-term credit will also be available for operating costs like feed and payroll.

$75M

The total funding amount available to hog farmers to stop production.

Government loans are a concern to the National Pork Producers Council which represents struggling U.S. hog farmers, said Nick Giordano, the council's vice-president.

"Producers can't get bank loans, so the Canadian government is stepping in. That's clearly a subsidy," said Giordano. "Money is flowing to producers that wouldn't otherwise."

The council will wait to see details of the assistance, but may end up lobbying the U.S. government to take trade action, he said. REUTERS

Ottawa to investigate woman's Kenyan ordeal: Minister

FALLOUT As Suaad Hagi Mohamud underwent hospital tests yesterday for an illness nagging her since her unwarranted stint in a Kenyan jail, Canada's public safety minister concedes the many unanswered questions in her case deserve answers.

"She's really sick," Mohamud's lawyer Raoul Boulakia said of the woman who arrived home to a hero's welcome at Pearson Saturday, and a tearful airport reunion with her 12-year-old son Mohamed Hussein, who she'd left with friends here while visiting her sick mother in Nairobi.

Even as Mohamud's doctors probed for answers, the Canadian government was beginning to look for its own answers in the case.

MIKE CASSESE/REUTERS

Suaad Hagi Mohamud, who was detained for three months in Kenya after authorities decided she didn't resemble her passport photo, embraces her son Mohamed Hussein upon her arrival at Pearson International Airport in Toronto Saturday.

Public Safety Minister Peter Van Loan said Ottawa will seek to determine "what decisions were made, and why, and to get a sense of what actually occurred."

But Van Loan said it's far too soon to talk about compensating the Toronto woman for her three-month ordeal, which began after Canadian high commission officials in Nairobi, Kenya, cancelled her Canadian passport and turned her over to Kenyan authorities as a stateless person — all because she didn't look like her four-year-old passport photo.

Mohamud has been losing weight and suffering respiratory problems since her eight-day incarceration in June at a Nairobi prison, Boulakia said.

Doctors were exploring whether she might have caught an infectious tropical disease, Boulakia said.

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Tropical storm Claudette forms in Gulf of Mexico

Tropical storm Claudette, the third of the Atlantic hurricane season, formed yesterday in the Gulf of Mexico east of the heaviest concentration of U.S. energy platforms, as two other storms, Ana and Bill, raced across the Atlantic. REUTERS

World

Senator asks for Suu Kyi's release

U.S. Senator Jim Webb said yesterday he had asked Myanmar to free opposition leader Aung San Suu Kyi, left, and let her take part in politics during talks that secured the release of an American jailed for visiting her. A Myanmar court sentenced Suu Kyi to another 18 months of house arrest for violating a security law after John Yettaw swam uninvited across a lake to her home in May. REUTERS

Vote nears in Afghanistan

Supporters of Afghanistan's main presidential candidates came out in their thousands yesterday in a last burst of campaign excitement with days to go before the ballot.

The few surveys that have been published show incumbent president Hamid Karzai in the lead, but not by enough to avoid a run-off against his surprisingly strong challenger, former foreign minister Abdullah Abdullah. By law, campaigning ends at midnight tonight, three days before Thursday's vote.

Karzai disappointed thousands in Kandahar who were hoping he would make an appearance at a rally addressed by his half-brother Ahmad Wali Karzai, Kandahar's provincial council chief.

Kandahar is Karzai's hometown as well as the heartland of the Taliban whose fighters have vowed to disrupt the poll with attacks. The UN says those threats may curb voter turnout. REUTERS

JONATHON BURCH/REUTERS

Supporters of Afghan presidential candidate Abdullah Abdullah film his speech with mobile phones at a rally in Kokcha, located in Afghanistan's northern Takhar province yesterday.

Ahmadinejad planning female cabinet ministers

IRAN President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad said yesterday he would propose at least three female ministers in his new cabinet following Iran's disputed election, an unprecedented move in the conservative Islamic state.

The hardline nationalist also said the West must be held to account for stoking unrest in Iran after the June 12 presidential vote, as the third mass trial of demonstrators accused of trying to overthrow clerical rule began.

The election and its aftermath have plunged Iran into its biggest internal crisis since the 1979 Islamic revolution, exposing deepening divisions within its ruling elite and also further straining relations with the West.

Ahmadinejad has until Wednesday to present a cabinet to parliament for approval but may get a rough ride from the conservatives who dominate the assembly, as well as from his moderate foes who see his next government as illegitimate. REUTERS

Seeking support

- Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's surprise announcement on state television that he would nominate several female ministers may be an attempt to shore up support among women. The president's moderate opponents campaigned on the need to enhance their position in Iran

Military drills prompt threat from North Korea

ASIA Communist North Korea denounced impending joint military exercises by South Korea and the U.S., and said it would "wipe them out" with nuclear weapons if they threatened it, its KCNA news agency said yesterday.

Kim Jong-il

South Korean and U.S. forces start computer simulation and communication exercises today. They come in the wake of rare conciliatory moves by Pyongyang, which this month released two U.S. journalists and a detained South Korean worker.

Yesterday, KCNA said reclusive North Korean leader Kim Jong-il had met the leader of the South's powerful Hyundai Group, a major investor in the North — a move that may comfort investors worried about increased tensions.

North Korea regularly denounces joint exercises as a preparation for invasion and nuclear war.

"Should the U.S. imperialists and the Lee Myung-bak group threaten the DPRK (North Korea) with nukes, it will retaliate against them with nukes," KCNA quoted a military official as saying. Lee Myung-bak is South Korea's president. REUTERS

News in brief

IRAQ A series of bombings in Iraq have triggered fiery accusations of blame between Arabs and Kurds, escalating a dispute over land and oil that has played into the hands of a resurgent al-Qaida. Bombings and suicide attacks have killed scores of people and caused enormous destruction near the troubled city of Mosul this month.

STEEL China was forced to halt the privatization of a state-owned steel firm after a protest by thousands of workers who said they had not received fair pay. It was the second time in less than a month that workers have been able to stop the privatization of a Chinese steel plant. REUTERS

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Mexico acts to prevent corruption

Mexico has fired more than 1,000 customs officers at airports and land crossings in a crackdown on corruption that lets tonnes of drugs and weapons flow across its borders, a newspaper reported yesterday. REUTERS

British PM stresses need for Afghan war

Prime Minister Gordon Brown said Britain must remain committed to the war in Afghanistan to help protect the world from al-Qaida attacks as four more British soldiers were reported killed in the conflict.

Three British soldiers died in an explosion while on patrol in Helmand province yesterday morning, the Defence Ministry said.

Earlier, the ministry said a soldier from the same battalion was killed in an explosion in the same area on Saturday.

The deaths brought to 204 the total of British soldiers killed in Afghanistan since Britain joined the U.S.-led invasion to topple the Taliban in 2001. July was the deadliest month so far, with 21 soldiers killed.

Brown has faced severe criticism at home over government policy in Afghanistan. But with a presidential election taking place there on Thursday, he said NATO forces must stay in place until the Afghan government, police and armed forces were capable of assuming more control.

Failure to do so would make the world more dangerous, he said. REUTERS

Terrorist planning

- According to Brown, three-quarters of terrorist plots in Britain originate in the mountain areas of Afghanistan and Pakistan.

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U.S. helps Taiwan in wake of disaster

AID The first U.S. military plane to land in Taiwan for three decades arrived yesterday with building materials to help reconstruction, a week after a typhoon brought devastating floods and mudslides.

The C-130 cargo plane flew to Tainan in Taiwan's south from its base in Okinawa, Japan. It was the first such flight since the U.S. broke off diplomatic ties after adopting a "one-China" policy following detente with main-land China.

So far, over 60 countries have donated around 68 million Taiwanese dollars ($2.2 million) in cash as well as other relief supplies, the foreign ministry said.

Singapore has sent food and medical supplies, and yesterday Australia sent disinfecting equipment.

The United States and China have both offered to provide heavy-lift helicopters to Taiwan's rescue teams, which are gradually shifting from saving lives to clearing up disaster areas for reconstruction.

Taiwan is considering whether to accept the offer from China, its political rival.

Typhoon Morakot dumped several metres of rain on Taiwan, washing away bridges, severing roads and triggering landslides that flattened villages, some of which were buried in mud several storeys high.

REUTERS

Casualties

- The official death toll from Taiwan's worst floods in about 50 years stands at 124, though the final figure may be much higher. Thousands are still trapped in the south of the island by mudslides and disruptions to land transport.

News in brief

ISRAEL The head of Israel's armed forces has been named as the victim of a soldier who stole his credit card details and passed them to dealers in stolen weapons, Israeli media said yesterday. The military police say the soldier used his mobile phone to take pictures of a credit card belonging to Lt.-Gen. Gabi Ashkenazi and then gave them to the dealers, who used them to make purchases.

REUTERS

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Comment

Cutting down memories

HineSight
Anne Hines
metronews.ca/hinesight

I have committed an eco-crime. Worse than using household cleaners so toxic they can neutralize a nuclear waste dump because, frankly, anyone who thinks all I need is soda water and elbow grease hasn't seen my bathroom. Worse than standing on my front step in February, pointing a spray can at the ozone layer — by that time of year I start to think of the Greenhouse-Effect as God's little gift to those of us who can't afford a Caribbean cruise.

What I did was this — I am a tree killer.

In my front yard there is … was … an aged cherry tree. Weeks ago the City Works Dept. declared the tree dangerously frail.

Yesterday, workers arrived to cut it down.

"I'm not emotionally prepared," I said.

City Workers: No problem. It's going to take at least 10 minutes to get our equipment ready.

Me: I might need longer.

They eye me warily with that "we're used to dealing with insane members of the public" look perfected by civic workers and retail clerks.

Workers: How long?

Me: Enough time to find some neighbours who will stand around sharing favourite tree-related stories, join in a ritual group tree-hug … then maybe have some barbecue. Is that too much to ask?

Workers: Not at all. So long as you can make it happen in the next 10 minutes.

I don't blame these men. I loved the tree.

But, the things that really matter in life fall into two categories: very reasonable, rational things we care about ourselves, and totally inexplicable irrational things other people care about.

Neighbours now stalk past the house thinking, "Tree killer." I know this because one of them said so.

Neighbour: You cut down your tree.

Me: The city did. It was really old. Over 80. When something's decrepit, you have to get rid of it, right?

Neighbour's mother: I'm 83. Tree killer.

I called my eco-champion friend, Rose.

Me: I'm going to write a book about how I'm not a tree killer. A sweeping saga. "Gone With The Chainsaw."

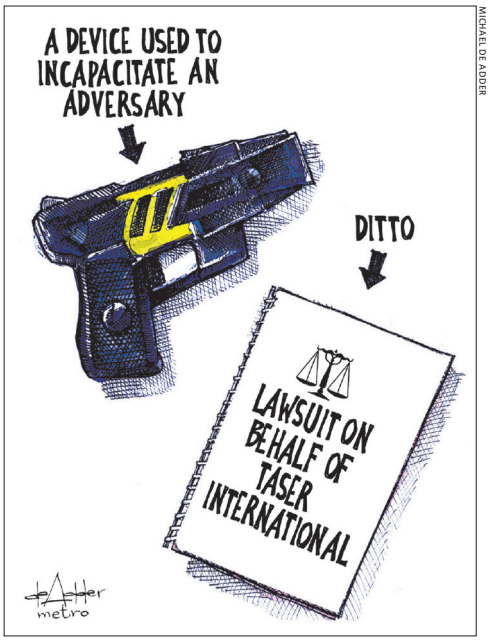
Rose: Using huge wads of paper might not be the best way to prove you care about trees.

In spring, the city will plant a silver oak. I will feed and water it.

I will become known again, I hope, as a tree nurturer. In the meantime, there's something I'll miss far more than my eco-friendly reputation.

I'll miss my cherry tree.

Anne Hines is an author and humour writer. She has written three novels and one collection of nonfiction humour.



MICHAEL DE ADDER

Worth mentioning

Chavez says Obama losing it, warns of imperial expansion

U.S. President Barack Obama is "lost in the Andromeda" galaxy on Latin American policy, his chief critic in the region, Venezuelan leader Hugo Chavez, said yesterday, while warning of U.S. "imperial expansion."

Last week Obama said critics of U.S. involvement in Latin America who are now asking Washington to do more to restore the ousted president of Honduras "can't have it both ways."

"We are not asking you to intervene in Honduras, Obama. On the contrary, we are asking that 'the empire' get its hands off Honduras and get its claws out of Latin America," Chavez said in on a television interview.

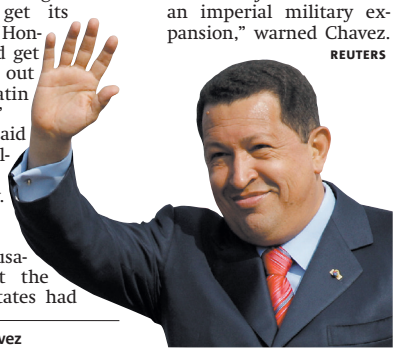
Chavez repeated an accusation that the United States had prior knowledge of the coup that deposed Honduran President Manuel Zelaya on June 28 and the military plane that flew Zelaya out of the country had used a U.S. base in Honduras.

Venezuela is planning to beef up its army by buying tanks and other weapons from Russia, Chavez said, adding that his country needs to be prepared for an attack.

Chavez claims the United States wants to control Venezuela's huge oil reserves as well as the Amazon region.

"This is just the start of an imperial military expansion," warned Chavez.

REUTERS



Hugo Chavez

Views

Joining in the city game of bus-spotting

InTransit
Steve Collins
metronews.ca/intransit

For bus riders, getting there is usually considerably less than half the fun. You wait for the bus, then board and ignore your fellow passengers as you wait for the trip to be over. You've got somewhere to be, and transit is the dull means to the end.

This is how I rode the bus before I started this column, but now I find myself exhibiting strange behaviour, like riding for the hell of it.

I take a bus from downtown to the transfer purgatory that is Hurdman Station, where I watch some riders sitting stone bored in the heat, others springing off one bus and sprinting to catch the next. Time spent between buses at Hurdman is either too long or too short.

I'm waiting for a chance to ride one of OC Transpo's new toys. I just miss one of those nifty double deckers heading for Tunney's Pasture, but manage to catch one of our new Orion VII diesel-electric hybrids.

The hybrids, which are expected to use about 25 per cent less fuel, have been gradually joining the fleet all summer.

So this is the bus of the future. The ceilings are noticeably higher, and the ride seems quieter. It's air conditioned and so far free of graffiti. Nice. The Orion VII's speedier acceleration takes an older woman by surprise as she tries to squeeze into a seat. She lurches and stumbles, but a quick-thinking nearby passenger helps her stay on her feet and get seated.

Up front, a mother with a stroller and Olympian patience restrains her multitasking toddler, who brings us to an unscheduled extra stop just before LeBreton by pulling on that irresistible yellow cord. Mom apologizes to the driver, but the little guy's helping to recharge the bus's lithium ion battery, which gets its juice from braking.

If I'm growing slightly nerdy about buses, and I think the accusation's valid, I've got a long way to go to catch up to the real transit enthusiasts. YouTube is packed with videos of various OC Transpo vehicles in action, many of which can be credited by prolific bus-watchers emac4ever, new flyer800 and breeze646.

On the OC Transpo Bus Fan Club group on Yahoo, they're trying to count the number of hybrid buses in service, trading tips on catching a double decker, and reporting sightings of the elusive bus 8792, the oldest bus in the fleet, last of the GM-made buses put into service in 1987.

I am clearly a Stevie-come-lately to the bus-spotting game.

Steve Collins lives, writes and walks in Ottawa; ottawaletters@metronews.ca

Tell us your views by email to ottawaletters@metronews.ca or comment on metronews.ca or on Twitter @metroottawa
Letters must include sender's full name, address and phone number – street name and phone numbers will NOT be published. We reserve the right to edit letters.

Lighten up

If you want to increase your car's fuel efficiency, make sure to get that junk out of the trunk. Extra weight decreases gas mileage and every 100 kilograms of unnecessary weight adds half a litre per 100 km to your vehicle's fuel consumption. **DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION**

Going Green

Bixi going overseas

Montreal is exporting its Bixi bike-rental program launched in May overseas to London, England and south of the border to Boston, CBC News Online reports. Montreal will also submit a bid when New York City issues a call for tenders for a bike-rental system.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

EDITOR: FERMIN DESOUZA, FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

Nature can create its own hybrids

EarthTones

Mythology is rife with the fantastic monster, hybrids between fierce creatures that embody the most frightening features of each parent. Think about the sphinx, the centaur, the mermaid, and the pantheon of Egyptian gods.

Our fascination with these hybrids did not end with the ancients, just pick up any Harry Potter book, or google "hybrids" and you will see the results of some bizarre breeding programs. As interesting are the names "tigon and liger," "pizzly bear," "zonkey."

This weekend's Toronto Star ran a story about a less startling, but ecologically more important hybrid, the coywolf. Coyotes, wolves and domesticated dogs can all interbreed freely, but generally do not given differences in social behaviour and opportunity. However, recent eastward expansion of the coyote's range, and fewer "would-be" mates for the wolves due to shrinking populations may have tipped the balance, increasing the likelihood of wolves and coyotes interbreeding.

The resulting offspring, coywolves, have some traits of wolves (large size and pack hunting) and some of coyotes (smaller home range, flexibility in habitat requirements, less wary of humans). This combination is creating a conflict in the rural-suburban areas to the east and north of Toronto, as these new hybrids are bold enough to hunt in packs during the daylight and can pose a threat to livestock.

REUTERS FILE PHOTO

Humans are often behind odd couplings, such as these "liger" cubs, but "hybrids" can also occur naturally, our columnists say.

In most cases, when two different species interbreed, there is no offspring. When there is an offspring, it usually is at a disadvantage to both parental species. However, every now and then, the result is a hybrid that combines the advantage of both parental species, and may even displace both parental species, essentially becoming a new species in its own right. This may be what we are seeing with the coywolves, evolution in action.

Far more common, and flying under the radar, are hybridizations that occur between plant species or invertebrate animals. Often these hybridizations are with invasive species, new to a habitat. In some cases, particularly plants, hybridization may contribute to the success and rapid spread of invasive species. Some of the plants, choking our waterways and displacing native terrestrial species, appear to find their success in combining the traits of native and non-native parent.

While the coywolf is locally important, and the animal charismatic (not all charisma is charming), it is these other hybrids that are most ecologically and economically important as they can alter whole landscapes (or waterbodies).

Often when we write articles about environmental challenges, the subtext is that we as a species are directly to blame. This one is a bit different. Humans do not dictate the behaviours and proclivities of plants and animals. We do not typically sic these hybrids on the environment. However, we do introduce would-be mates by moving exotic species around the planet (accidentally or intentionally), by altering habitat, and by reducing populations.

We do not make the lonely wolf odd enough to mate with a coyote, but we may leave the odd wolf lonely.

Sophia Dore is an environmental scientist with Conestoga-Rovers & Associates. Andrew Laursen is an assistant professor at Ryerson University; earthtones.metro@gmail.com.

Biogas a promising biofuel

POWER Three Ontario entrepreneurs are turning organic waste from Ontario's farms and food processing plants into the province's newest biofuel industry.

Methane from manure and other organic matter traps 21 times more heat in the atmosphere than carbon dioxide, making it a major contributor to global warming. But it's also a highly potent fuel like natural gas. And, it can be converted into biogas — a form of energy produced through the anaerobic digestion of food processing, agricultural and livestock waste. In fact, biogas offers a higher energy yield than ethanol from waste that most people consider to be unusable. One tonne of banana peels can be converted into enough energy to power three trips on Toronto's longest streetcar line (25 kilometres).

Idea

- StormFisher was the idea of three entrepreneurs — Bas van Berkel, Chris Guillon and Ryan Little.

Working with Canada's farmers and agri-food industries, StormFisher Biogas is constructing biogas facilities in London, Guelph and Niagara this year. At full capacity, these plants will offset the CO^2 equivalent of 26,000 cars a year and create full-time jobs in rural areas, as well as indirect jobs in transportation and waste handling services.

NEWS CANADA

Bike a day keeps doctor away

COMMUTE "Now that the weather is nice and the days are longer, strapping on a helmet and hopping on a bike sounds like a terrific idea. You simply can't go wrong when you go by bike," said Denise Boisvert, an adviser in insurance and underwriting, AssurFinance for Institutions, AssurDirect and Desjardins Relations.

According to Vélo Québec, 59 per cent of employees who bike to work enjoy their commute, compared to just 38 per cent of employees who drive.

Cycling is great for your heart, your body and your mood. It's a great aerobic workout that allows people of all ages to get moving and start seeing the benefits in just a few weeks. In addition to increasing lung function and reducing stress, regular cycling increases blood circulation in your legs, keeps osteoporosis at bay and transforms fat into muscle.

However. it's important that you find the right balance and pace yourself. When you're starting out, choose a day that's not too windy, stick to fairly flat terrain, and limit your ride to no more than an hour and a half. If your experience is a positive one, you'll be more likely to do it again.

NEWS CANADA

Cycling to work is great for your body and your mood.

Small Steps: Single bus ride takes 40 vehicles off road

If you drive to work, try riding the bus once this week. A single bus takes 40 vehicles off the road during rush hour, saves 70,000 litres of fuel and reduces air pollutants by nine tonnes a year. Carpooling is another environmentally friendly option. DAVID SUZUKI FOUNDATION

Challenge: Quit your car

Zipcar, one of the world's largest car-sharing services, threw urban residents in 13 cities a challenge with its 2009 Low-Car Diet. Beginning July 15, participants from United States, Canada and London, England, pledged to give up their personally owned car for one month. Instead, they were to bike, walk, utilize public transportation and were given a Zipcar membership.

How did they do? At the end of the challenge that wrapped up last week, Low-Car Diet participants walked 7,532 kilometres biked 9,765 kilometres, took 1,923 bus trips and 1,044 Zipcar trips, according to the organizers.

In the midst of a challenging economy, the Low-Car Diet gives people the opportunity to test drive a low-car and less expensive lifestyle. says the organizers, adding that the program gives participants the experience of living without a car and the associated economic, environmental and health benefits.

According to a survey, the average American household owns two cars and spends 19 per cent of income on vehicle-related expenses. Conversely, 65 per cent of Zipcar members report selling an existing car or delaying the purchase of a new one, says Zipcar, adding that members spend just six per cent of their income on transportation-related costs.

After last year's Low-Car Diet 58 per cent of participants said they planned to continue to live without a personally owned car, and another 31 per cent considered the same commitment. METRO NEWS SERVICES

MARQUIS PHOTO

Low-Car Diet participant Cory Marcus gets comfortable in one of Zipcar's Hybrid vehicles at the kickoff of the 2009 campaign.

Exxon eyes biofuel made from algae

Exxon Mobil Corp. will invest $600 million US over the next five to six years on trying to developing biofuel from algae, even though the oil major has said renewables will be only a small part of global energy supply.

Exxon, placing its largest financial bet on renewable fuels, is forming a research and development alliance with Synthetic Genomics Inc, a privately held company that focuses on gene-based research, the company said.

The project, which would cost billions to fully develop, is in its initial stages, so commercially viable biofuel made from algae would be many years away, Exxon said.

"We need to be realistic," said Emil Jacobs, vice-president of research at Exxon. "This is not going to be easy, and there are no guarantees of success."

"This is not going to be easy, and there are no guarantees of success."
Emil Jacobs, vice-president of research at Exxon

Spending on the algae fuels project will require only a fraction of Exxon's annual capital budget of $25 billion to $30 billion, but it will be the world's largest biofuels development project of its kind, said Craig Venter, genome pioneer and founder of Synthetic Genomics.

As one of its first steps, the Exxon and Synthetic Genomics plan to build a research facility in San Diego, the companies said.

Other companies, including Europe's largest oil company by market value, Royal Dutch Shell Plc., are also researching the possibility of generating motor fuel from algae, but all parties agree a commercial solution is years off.

Exxon said it reviewed the viability of all other types of biofuels and determined the algae project was best after considering factors including environmental performance and economies, Jacobs told reporters.

Biofuel from algae would have a key advantage over existing biofuels in that it would not compete with food crops for land, thereby meeting energy needs without pushing up food costs.

REUTERS

Your community has strong roots + keep them growing

Urban property owners of land one hectare or less need a City permit to remove trees 50 centimetres in diameter or greater as of September 1, 2009.

The City of Ottawa's Urban Tree Conservation By-law, which aims to protect the city's urban forest, comes into full effect **September 1**. Under the by-law, owners of urban properties one hectare or less in size must obtain a permit from the City to remove a tree that is 50 centimetres (20 inches) in diameter or greater. There is no permit fee.

The by-law does not apply to rural properties, with the exception of a small area in the city's east end between the urban boundary and Ted Kelly Lane.

For further details, to find out how the by-law affects urban properties greater than one hectare, or to obtain a permit, visit **ottawa.ca/urbantree**, e-mail **urbantree@ottawa.ca**, call **3-1-1** (TTY: 613-580-2401), or visit a Client Service Centre.

A community is only as strong as its roots.
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BIRDDOG

TSX closes slightly higher Friday

Canada's main stock index ended slightly higher Friday as an end-of-session rally in financial shares outweighed weakness in commodity stocks, which were under pressure after a U.S. consumer confidence report raised doubts about economic recovery. REUTERS

Business

Auto program dings donations

The popular "cash-for-clunkers" program is boosting U.S. auto sales and manufacturing, but is also slashing donations to charities that rely on gifts of cars to fund social programs. Volunteers of America and other charities said such donations have quickly fallen up to 12 per cent — and fear a 25 per cent drop eventually, or over $100 million — as owners rush to trade gas guzzlers for new fuel-efficient models while federal rebates of up to $4,500 last. REUTERS

EDITOR: FERMIN.DESOUZA@METRONEWS.CA

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U.S. spending threat to Canada's energy firms?

The Obama administration's titanic $60-billion spending plan for the U.S. clean energy sector is luring investors away from "green" businesses in Canada, threatening the industry's growth here.

Already battered by recession and tight credit markets, Canada's renewable energy and clean technology companies must now compete for investment with their U.S. peers, who have an unprecedented cache of federal cash grants and tax incentives.

A start-up may think twice before setting up shop in Canada, curbing the country's ability to create jobs and generate tax revenue, and losing technological innovation.

"The U.S. has sent a very strong signal that renewable energy is going to play a central role in both energy-environment and economic recovery strategies. We don't have the same signals here federally," said Robert Hornung, president of the Canadian Wind Energy Association. REUTERS

Green spending

- The United States plans to invest $59 billion US of its $787-billion stimulus plan in green energy. That comprises $39 billion for U.S. Department of Energy projects and $20 billion in tax incentives for industries such as solar energy, wind power and geothermal.

Colonial becomes 74th failed U.S. bank

ECONOMY Colonial Bank, of Montgomery Ala., was shuttered Friday and its assets sold to BB&T Corp,. marking the largest bank failure this year.

The bank closure, the 74th this year, brings an end to the Alabama lender which has seen its problems mount amid the financial crisis. The failure is expected to cost the Federal Deposit Insurance Corp.'s insurance fund $2.8 billion US.

BB&T, Winston-Salem, N.C., will buy about $22 billion of Colonial's assets, according to the FDIC. The FDIC and BB&T have agreed to share losses on about $15 billion of those assets. The bank had deposits of about $20 billion as of June 30.

Colonial's holding company Colonial BancGroup Inc. said last Friday it faced a criminal probe related to accounting irregularities at its mortgage lending unit. REUTERS

JIM YOUNG / REUTERS

A BB&T bank branch sign is seen in Arlington, Va.

Business in brief

MEDIA Comcast Corp. has been hoarding cash to better manage its balance sheet but investors worry that it could be building a war chest for a splashy acquisition similar to its failed 2004 bid for Walt Disney Co. Investors' value shares of Comcast at near-historical lows, as the cable provider's strategy has fuelled speculation it wants to be a major player in the media content market.

BANKING When Allied Irish Banks confirmed it had been approached from a third party interested in taking a minority stake, it didn't take long before eyes turned to Canada. After Royal Bank of Canada denied it was the suitor, CIBC and TD Bank have emerged as the most likely candidates. REUTERS

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Fastball to the head puts Wright on DL

Mets slugger David Wright was released from hospital and put on the disabled list yesterday, one day after he was hit square on the helmet by a 94 mph fastball from San Francisco's Matt Cain. Wright still had a headache and was experiencing "post-concussion symptoms," a team spokesman said. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Sports

USL to Ottawa?

The United Soccer Leagues are up for sale. Major League Soccer has inquired about buying the USL. Ottawa is on a list of possible USL expansion cities. For the full story, read It's Called Football by Ben Rycroft at metronews.ca/sports.

EDITOR: CHRIS.CLEMENTS@METRONEWS.CA

Yang spoils Woods' party

South Korea's Y.E. Yang became Asia's first male major winner after overhauling Tiger Woods in stunning fashion to clinch the U.S. PGA Championship by three shots yesterday.

Trailing American world No. 1 and overwhelming favourite Woods by two strokes overnight, Yang, ranked 110th, kept his composure in difficult, swirling winds at Hazeltine National in Chaska, Minn., to fire a two-under-par 70.

"This means the world to me right now," a beaming Yang, 37, told reporters, speaking through an interpreter. "It hasn't really sunken in, but I do know the significance of it.

"I wasn't that nervous because it's just a game of golf. I've tried to master the art of controlling my emotions throughout my career and I think it turned out well today."

Woods, in pursuit of a 15th major title but his first this year, missed four birdie putts from 12 feet or less to card an erratic 75 featuring five bogeys and two birdies. REUTERS

Canadian golfers

- Stephen Ames of Calgary finished at 3 over.
- Mike Weir of Bright's Grove, Ont., missed the cut on Friday.

Rogers Cup **Murray wins**

MATTHEW STOCKMAN/GETTY IMAGES

Andy Murray reacts during his win over Juan Martin del Potro in the final at the Rogers Cup in Montreal yesterday. Murray overcame sweltering heat to beat del Potro 6-7 7-6 6-1

Van Koeverden deems world showing 'completely acceptable'

MATTHEW WUEST
matthew.wuest@metronews.ca

When Adam van Koeverden doesn't make the international podium, he usually isn't very satisfied.

But after a fifth-place finish in the K-1 500 metres at the world sprint canoe-kayak championships in Dartmouth, N.S., yesterday, the three-time Olympic medallist came to terms with the result as soon as he stepped off the water.

"It's completely acceptable to be fifth in the world today given everything I've gone through," he said.

Two months ago, the 27-year-old from Oakville, Ont., was being airlifted by helicopter out of the Grand Canyon after breaking his ankle on a white-water rafting trip.

Sports in brief

BASEBALL Greg Zaun's pinch-hit grand slam in the eighth inning shattered a tie game and gave the Tampa Bay Rays a 5-2 victory over Toronto yesterday and a series win in the finale of a three-game set.

HOCKEY The New York Rangers have added former captain and franchise icon Mark Messier to the front office. The Rangers announced yesterday that Messier has been named a special assistant to club president and general manager Glen Sather. METRO NEWS SERVICES

India plans 14 new innovation universities: Starting in 2010, India's Human Resource Development Ministry plans to establish 14 new "innovation universities" with "disciplinary focuses" to advance research and development in health, environment, power plants and other areas. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Workology

Financial aid boom

After a dismal economic year for young people and scarce summer job opportunities, the Ontario Student Assistance Program has seen an increase in students turning to financial aid to finance their education.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

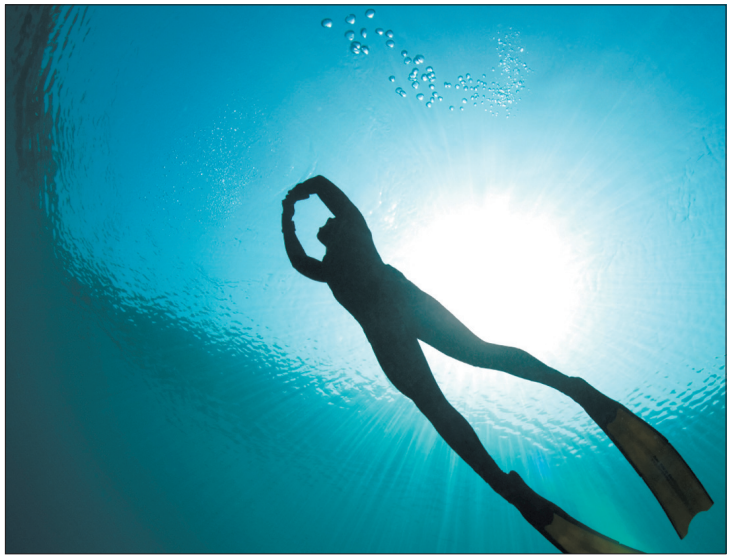
EDITOR: DOUGLAS.DUNLOP@METRONEWS.CA

The deeper the better

OddJobs

Diane Peters

Metronews.ca/oddjobs



Mandy-Rae Cruickshank is a world-record free-diver and also runs training courses in the discipline.

Mandy-Rae Cruickshank grew up wanting to be a marine biologist who worked with great white sharks.

Although Cruickshank, now 35, grew up in landlocked Edmonton, she spent most of her time in the water and became a lifeguard and a competitive synchronized swimmer as a teen.

Then she met a marine biologist and he talked her out of a career that took years of expensive education.

"So I thought I'd be a scuba instructor. That sounds like a good way to stay in the water," says Cruickshank

At 20, she moved to Vancouver and started teaching scuba. She ended up teaching instructors and managing a dive shop.

Then she met her future husband, Kirk Krack, in 2000, and he introduced her to free diving. Eighteen months later she broke her first world record in the sport.

Free diving basically involves going down into the water as far as you can while holding your breath. No tanks, just fins and a mask.

There are nine different competitive disciplines in the sport — they measure either time underwater or distance travelled in either a pool or in the ocean — and Cruickshank holds world records in seven of them.

Krack was already running Performance Freediving when they met. In 2006, the company started getting busy enough for Cruickshank to quit her job and help full-time.

The couple runs four-day courses in free diving to groups all around the world. Sometimes it's just recreational divers, but they've also trained photographers and celebrities such as Tiger Woods and so-called endurance artist David Blaine.

Teaching days are long and physically exhausting. By the end of a course, participants can hold their breath for as long as five minutes underwater, dive as deep as 132 feet and practise good water safety. You can black out while doing these dives and without a buddy in the water you can die.

For the record, she can hold her breath for 6 minutes and 25 seconds.

Even when she's travelling, Cruickshank is constantly on her laptop and BlackBerry, taking care of the business side of the company. "When you're running your own company, you sometimes don't get days off," she says.

Recently, Performance Freediving opened an office in Vancouver, so staff are now helping out with some of the administrative work.

The couple spends every May in the Cayman Islands, training and competing in free diving. That's where Cruickshank has broken her world records.

They also get hired by documentary film crews to help with ocean shoots.

"The best decision I ever made was giving up a desk job to do something I love."

Diane Peters once hawked magic pens at the Canadian National Exhibition. She's now a writer and part-time journalism instructor.

The Lowdown

Job title: Free diver
Salary: $40,000 a year
Education/training: Most divers are trained in scuba; Performance Freediving has developed its own certification
Best Part of the Job: "Meeting people and seeing them experience it for the first time. Seeing them realize they can do the unthinkable."
Worst Part of the Job: "The constant air travel."

"The best decision I ever made was giving up a desk job to do something I love."
Mandy-Rae Cruickshank

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Bob Dylan not recognized by police
Music legend Bob Dylan was stopped last month by a police officer who did not recognize him. Officers were alerted after a man was spotted "acting suspiciously" while taking a stroll in New Jersey. Police demanded to see his ID. **EONLINE.COM**

Entertainment

Jackson tribute

Oscar winner A.R. Rahman is reportedly developing an album in memory of entertainment icon Michael Jackson, which will include musicians from all over the world.
METRO WORLD NEWS

EDITOR: DEAN.LISK@METRONEWS.CA

Ledger smelled a rat

Late actor directed gory whaling video for Modest Mouse

CAM LINDSAY
for Metro Canada

You'd be forgiven for assuming that the reason behind a late summer Modest Mouse tour is the band's new record. But when asked if the North American tour was planned around the release date of the EP, No One's First, And You're Next, frontman Isaac Brock laughs and says, "No, but good timing, huh?"

Featuring three recent 7-inch singles and a pair of B-sides, the indie rock alumni's latest release is not a load of filler, but a compilation for the non-collectors. "The idea of the EP was that not everybody owns a record player and was going to buy the singles that were released," Brock explains. "This is just a way to put these out so people who don't buy 7-inch records can get them all together. It's music, you don't have to be a format specific person to enjoy it."

So far, the song receiving most attention is King Rat. An unlikely single, the song has become the EP's focal point mostly because of its video — which was directed by the late actor Heath Ledger. A stunningly gory animated short film that turns the tables on the whaling industry, Brock says he only played a small role in its creation. "We kept discussing the idea and refining it, but (Heath) chose the animator. It was his baby. I just kept an eye on it."

"We kept discussing the idea and refining it, but (Heath Ledger) chose the animator. It was his baby. I just kept an eye on it."
Isaac Brock

Modest Mouse live

- Modest Mouse will be in Montreal for a concert at Metropolis on Wednesday.

The EP will be the only new material the band will be performing on tour. As far as a sixth album goes, Brock says, "No, there isn't anything. There are a whole bunch of stems for songs. I'm gonna do this tour then come home, sit down and we're gonna really work on that."

Just months ago Modest Mouse wrapped up a two-year trek supporting 2007's We Were Dead Before the Ship Even Sank. Brock says the point of this new tour is simply to keep the well-oiled machine moving. "We like doing tours, but if we don't do it for too long we get kinda rusty."

No One's First, And You're Next, the latest EP from rock act Modest Mouse, includes the song King Rat, which is receiving attention because its video was directed by late actor Heath Ledger.

The band made Canadians proud by kicking off their month-long tour in Halifax followed by Montreal, Kingston and two Toronto shows. "To be honest, I'm not sitting down with a map and circling s–, it's not anything like that," Brock says in a wry tone. "It's like, 'Let's do this chunk of land and start in Halifax.' We start in Nova Scotia because I've never been and always wanted to go. And the rest just seemed like nice towns on the way."

Box office

Ticket sales for Friday through Sunday at U.S. and Canadian theatres, according to studio estimates compiled on Sunday:

1. **District 9:** $37 million US
2. **G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra:** $22.5 million
3. **The Time Traveler's Wife:** $19.2 million
4. **Julie & Julia:** $12.4 million
5. **G-Force:** $6.9 million
6. **The Goods: Live Hard, Sell Hard:** $5.4 million
7. **Harry Potter:** $5.2 million
8. **The Ugly Truth:** $4.5 million
9. **Ponyo:** $3.5 million
10. **(500) Days of Summer:** $3 million

REUTERS

Kenya's**Style**

Kenya Hunt
Read the blog at metronews.ca/kenyasstyle

For complete online movie listings, trailers, reviews and tickets, visit:
metronews.ca/movies

primetime | **news** | **sports** | **family** | **cable variety**

DT	Vu	SC	C		7:00	7:30	8:00	8:30	9:00	9:30	10:00	10:30	11:00
8/17/09	265	353	2	TVO	Time Team		Urban Goddess: Jane Jacobs		Midsomer Murders		Auschwitz:Nazi-Final Solution		J Jacobs
	211	331	3	GTV	ET Canada	Entertainment	House "Locked In"		Lie to Me (HDTV)		Brothers & Sisters		News
	-	-	5	SRC	Des squelettes	La Petite vie	Chère Betty (HDTV) (SC)		Bons baisers de France (SC)		Le Téléjournal et Les Nou		TJ Ontario
	209	342	6	CHRO	The Road to Avonlea		Gossip Girl (HDTV)		Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Comedy Now
	196	311	7	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		CSI: Miami "Chip/Tuck"		News
	208	303	8	CBC	Coronation St.	Jeopardy!	Little Mosque	Sophie (HDTV)	Just for Laughs		CBC News: The National		The Hour
	-	360	9	NBC	Wheel-Fortune	Jeopardy!	Great American Road Trip (N)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		Dateline NBC		News
	117	713	10	TVA	Les Gags	Sketch Show	Laura Cadieux	Km/h (SC)	Monk (HDTV) (SC)		TVA 22 heures	Sucré-salé	*Manigances*
	-	-	11	QS	C't'une joke	C't'une joke	CSI: NY (SC)		Private Practice (SC)		Le Sport	Entraînement	Call TV
	137	763	12	TFO	Panorama été	Météo	Rebut global	Villages	*Milou en mai* ★★★ (1990, Com. dramatique) Michel Piccoli.				Météo
	-	362	13	CBS	Dr. Phil (HDTV)		How I Met	How I Met	Two/Half Men	Big Bang Th	CSI: Miami "Chip/Tuck"		Two/Half Men
	216	395	14	OMN2	Raymond	According-Jim	Omni News: S. Asian Edition		Omni News: Cantonese Edition		Two/Half Men	King	Buffalo Spirit
	214	344	15	CITY	Law & Order: SVU		Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Dating in the Dark (N)		(10:01) Murdoch Mysteries		News
	115	343	16	CFMT	Two/Half Men	The Simpsons	Omni News: Italian Edition (N)		Vivere Il	Omni News:	The Simpsons	King of the Hill	Metropia
	218	345	18	E!	The Insider (N)	E! News	How I Met	How I Met	The Soup	Greatest Myst.	Final 24		News/Eleven
	-	361	20	ABC	Action News	Entertainment	Who Wants to Be a Millionaire		Dating in the Dark (N)		(10:01) Castle (HDTV)		News
	512	396	24	CPAC	Tête-à-tête	Beyond Poli	L'Heure politique		Comités du Sénat				Heure polit.
	651	355	25	CTS	Little House on the Prairie		Michael Coren Show		100 Huntley Street		Life Today	This Is Day	John Hagee
	-	365	36	FOX	TMZ (N)	Seinfeld	House "Locked In"		Lie to Me (HDTV)		FOX 2 News (N)		News
	-	-	64	PBS	Business Rpt.	Wings-Canada	Antiques Roadshow		History Detectives (N)		Objects and Memory		Charlie Rose
	205	312	104	CTV	Hollywood	etalk	Criminal Minds (HDTV)		Law & Order: Criminal Intent		CSI: Miami "Chip/Tuck"		News
	502	390	26	NW	CBC News	Our World	The Hour		CBC News: The National		Allergy Planet Allergies.		National
	500	500	33	CNN	Lou Dobbs Tonight		Campbell Brown (N)		Larry King Live (N)		Anderson Cooper 360 (HDTV)		
	406	417	27	net	The Pen		MLB Baseball Minnesota Twins at Texas Rangers. From Rangers Ballpark in Arlington, Texas.						Sportsnet Con.
	126	730	28	RDI	24 Heures en 60 minutes		Grands reportages (SC)		Le Téléjournal (SC)		RDI en direct	Le National	Le Téléjournal
	400	280	30	TSN	WTA Tennis Rogers Cup -- Day One. (HDTV) From Toronto. (Live)						SportsCentre (HDTV) (Live)		
	410	403	52	SCR	RaceNight				(9:15) WWE Monday Night Raw				Score Tonight
	411	457	56	OLN	Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter	Bounty Hunter	Survivorman		Ghost Hunters		Bounty Hunter
	417	406	59	SC	Pimp My Ride	Pass Time	This Week in NASCAR (N)		SuperCars	SuperCars	Barrett-Jackson		Car Crazy
	554	544	48	TEL	Jimmy Two	Total Drama	6TEEN	6TEEN	Futurama	Punch	Robot Chicken	American Dad	Moral Orel
	557	540	51	FAM	Wizards-Place	Han. Montana	Zack & Cody	Latest Buzz	Wizards-Place	Life Derek	Ned's School	Cory in House	Zack & Cody
	551	542	65	YTV	The Next Star 2		Malcolm-Mid.	Futurama	League-Evil	Zixx Level	The Next Star 2		Mystery Hnt.
	570	580	29	MM	The Daily Fix		Ranked!		mmtop10.ca		Entourage	Gene Simmons	The Daily Fix
	615	520	31	A&E	Intervention "Brad"		Intervention "Donald"		Intervention (HDTV) (N)		Hoarders (N)		Paranormal
	628	584	32	SPKE	CSI: Crime Scene Invstgtn.		UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		UFC Unleashed		Unleashed
	521	560	34	TLC	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	Cake Boss	Jon & Kate	Jon & Kate	Cake Boss (N)	Cake Boss	Cake Boss
	145	761	35	TV5	Secrets d'histoire			Antiquités, brocantes, vide-greniers: les nouvelles tendances				Maritime	Journal TV5
	616	521	39	SHO	The Outer Limits		Cashing In	Kink in Hair	*XIII* (2009, Suspense) Val Kilmer, Stephen McHattie.				House
	620	523	40	BVO	When Moses Woke		7 - Solvents	Chimeras	Rita MacNeil		And They Danced		Law & Order
	520	505	42	DIS	Daily Planet		MythBusters		Dirty Jobs Spider venom.		Heli-Loggers		Daily Planet
	575	583	43	CMT	Dallas Cheerleaders		Home Improve.	Home Improve.	Reba	Reba	Hope & Faith	Hope & Faith	Greatest
	601	562	45	SLC	Skin Deep	Til Debt-Part	Newlywed	Newlywed	Nearly Dead	Nearly Dead	In Laws	In Laws	ET Canada
	625	548	46	COM	Air Farce	22 Minutes	22 Minutes	Comedy Now	The Simpsons	South Park	Russell Peters: Red, White		Daily Show
	294	529	47	TBS	Family Guy	Family Guy	House-Payne	House-Payne	*Jackie Brown* ★★★ (1997, Crime Drama) Pam Grier, Samuel L. Jackson.				
	600	564	49	H&G	House Hunters	Property Virgin	For Rent	Income Prop.	Marriage	My First Place	House Hunters	House Hunters	Holmes-Homes
	627	528	50	SPC	Stargate Atlantis (DVS)		Star Trek: Voyager		*Path of Destruction* (2005, Science Fiction), David Keith				Stargate SG-1
	581	566	53	MTV	MTV Cribs	After	MTV News	Cribs	16 and Pregnant		16 and Pregnant		MTV Live
	618	524	54	TROP	Once a Thief		Carlawood	Prod. Parker	Ground Up		Prod. Parker	Prod. Parker	Prod. Parker
	522	506	55	HIS	NCIS "Ex-File"		Tank Overhaul		Victory 1945 "Last Days"		NCIS "Ex-File"		Turning Points
	129	773	60	CD	Biographies (HDTV)		Voyage d'enfer (HDTV) Doc.		Images-chocs		Scènes de crime (HDTV)		Pris au piège
	261	394	61	V	Murder, She Wrote		Green Grass	Summer Wine	Past Life Investigation		Unbreakable Minds		Poltergeist
	602	567	62	W	Style by Jury	Friends	How Clean	Kim	Love It or List It		*Bridal Fever* (2008, Romance) Andrea Roth.		
	269	350	70	APTN	Notre Peuple		Tam	Pachamama	*Johnny Mnemonic* ★ (1995, Science Fiction) Keanu Reeves.				Tshinanu
	621	527	71	TLK	The Ellen DeGeneres Show		TMZ (N)	etalk	Canada's Next Top Model		Tonight Show-Conan O'Brien		TMZ
	603	561	95	FN	Chef at Home	Chuck-Day Off	Food Jammers	Glutton-Punish.	Food Detective	Get on Plate	At the Table	At the Table	Restaurant

critics'corner

Little Mosque on the Prairie

There can't be that many qualified imams wandering around a town the size of Mercy, can there? Nevertheless, when Amaar (Zaib Shaikh) decides to come back from Toronto and resume his service at the mosque, he finds out he can't just pick up where he left off; he needs to reapply for the position. Carlo Rota, Sheila McCarthy and Sitara Hewitt also star in "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to Mercy." 8 PM on 8 CBC

Great American Road Trip

The competition intensifies seriously as the three remaining families travel to California and try to secure a spot in the final two, after the long ride on this amazing journey from Chicago to California along the fabled Route 66. Comic Reno Collier is host. 8 PM on 9 NBC

Hoarders

Like its sister A&E shows "Intervention" and "Obsessed," this new series delves into the lives of troubled people and tries to get them help. In this case, it's people who fill their homes with stuff and can't throw anything out. The premiere introduces Jennifer and Ron, whose house is so cluttered they're afraid their children will be taken away, and Jill, who has four refrigerators and two freezers stuffed with decaying food. 10 PM on 31 A&E

Kendra to carry on family name

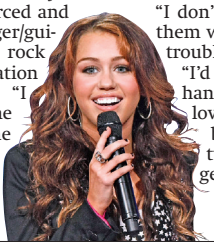
Kendra Wilkinson and Hank Baskett have picked a name for their son, who is due Christmas Day: Hank Baskett IV. Wilkinson explained: "Hank's dad and his grandfather were both named Hank, so it was very important to us to carry on the family tradition." PEOPLE.COM

Celebrity Buzz

Miley's bro vs. Jonas Bros?

OVERPROTECTIVE Don't look for Miley Cyrus's big brother Trace to join a boy band anytime soon, people.com reports.

"I'm not trying to clean my image to make anyone happy," the pierced and tattooed singer/guitarist for the rock group Metro Station told Details. "I could have gone the route of the Jonas Brothers. Those guys can't live their lives freely. They have to put out this image that's totally fake."



Cyrus, 20, says he could take them all in a fight, though he'd back off on his sister's ex-boyfriend Nick.

"I don't think any of them would be much trouble," said Cyrus. "I'd never lay a hand on Nick — I love that kid — but the other two better not get in my way."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jen a real workout-aholic

DEDICATION Jennifer Aniston works out at 3 a.m. every day, femalefirst.co.uk reports.

The 40-year-old actress, who is currently filming The Bounty in New York, wants to stay in shape despite her hectic schedule — so she gets up in the middle of the night to exercise.

"There are a lot of early starts on set, so she has had to get up at 3 a.m. to get two hours in the gym before filming at 5 a.m. She is supposed to be playing a 35-year-old, and is concerned she won't look the part now she is 40.

"It isn't just for this part, either. Every time she is offered the role of a mother, she turns it down — she wants the young characters."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

George arrested after accident

UH-OH Police arrested singer George Michael on suspicion of driving under the influence, but he was released without charges after a car accident near London Friday, people.com reports.

Michael was banned from driving for two years in 2007 after pleading guilty to driving under the influence.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

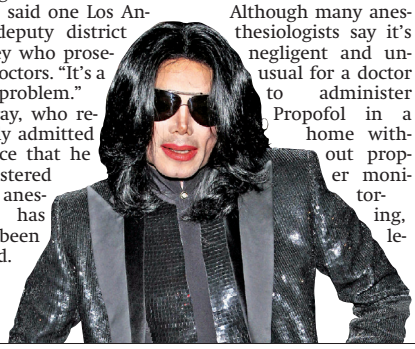
Multiple drugs complicate MJ case?

COMPLICATIONS For authorities investigating Michael Jackson's death, more could end up meaning less, people.com reports.

If the entertainer's autopsy report reveals other potent drugs besides the powerful anesthesia Propofol, as has been widely reported, prosecutors will have a more difficult time building a manslaughter case against Jackson's private physician, experts say.

In short: More drugs, potentially less criminal responsibility for Dr. Conrad Murray.

"You have to show that the doctor knew about all of these other doctors prescribing these other drugs," said one Los Angeles deputy district attorney who prosecutes doctors. "It's a classic problem."



Murray, who reportedly admitted to police that he administered the anesthetic, has not been charged. Search warrants served to Murray indicate he's the target of a manslaughter investigation.

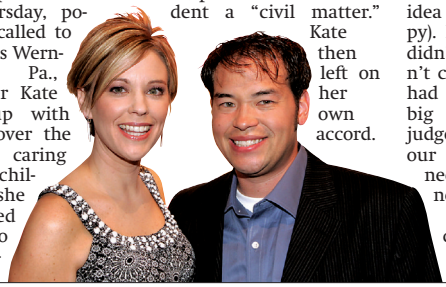
Although many anesthesiologists say it's negligent and unusual for a doctor to administer Propofol in a home without proper monitoring, legal experts say that fact alone might not be enough to prosecute Murray for more than an administrative-code infraction if it can't be proven that the Propofol alone was what killed him.

According to the Los Angeles Times, Jackson's toxicology report revealed a few drugs, such as the anti-depressant Xanax, in addition to Propofol. Legal experts say this helps explain why, seven weeks after Jackson's death, no charges have been filed and authorities are staying mum. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Jon and Kate in babysitter dispute

OVERREACTING? Jon Gosselin is speaking out about an incident that had his estranged wife Kate calling the cops and crying on Thursday, calling it a "miscommunication," people.com reports.

On Thursday, police were called to the family's Wernersville, Pa., home after Kate showed up with concerns over the babysitter caring for her children. But she was denied access to the property because of her custody agreement.



"She tried to 'cry it up' with the cops and it didn't work," Jon said. "They said, 'You have to leave.'" According to the reality star, police called the incident a "civil matter."

Kate then left on her own accord.

Jon says he called a babysitter, Stephanie Santoro, to watch the children because he had to "get things done."

Kate, apparently, wasn't thrilled with the babysitter he hired. "I have no idea (why she was unhappy). I guess (because) she didn't have approval. I didn't come home when she had custody and make a big stink. We're good judges of taking care of our kids and when we need babysitters, we need babysitters."

Kate Gosselin had no comment on the matter. METRO NEWS SERVICES

Brad: 'I used to be a stoner'

CONFESSION Brad Pitt played a pot smoker in 1993's True Romance and admits life imitated art for him, usmagazine.com reports.

"I certainly had my day," Pitt, 45, told HBO's Bill Maher Friday after the talk show host called the actor's role "one of the best stoner performances."

Maher also recounted a New Year's Eve party at which he says he witnessed Pitt rolling "the most perfect" joints he had ever seen. Pitt's response? "I'm an artist."

But Pitt admits he kicked the habit for the six kids he has with partner Angelina Jolie: "I'm a dad now. You want to be alert and my eyes used to glaze over when I did that."

GETTY IMAGES

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Mary J. joins Idol judging panel

NEW ADDITION Mary J. Blige will meet up with American Idol in Atlanta for show auditions, people.com reports. On Friday, the show wrapped up auditions in Boston, where Victoria Beckham has been filling Paula Abdul's spot.

METRO NEWS SERVICES

Wedding bells for Alyssa

HAPPILY EVER AFTER With nature and family as themes, actress Alyssa Milano wed Hollywood agent David Bugliari at his family's estate in New Jersey on Saturday, her rep confirms to people.com.

Milano, wearing a custom Vera Wang gown and holding a bouquet of lilies of the valley, walked down an aisle strewn with cream-coloured rose petals and grass to the tune of John Lennon's Imagine.

The couple exchanged vows under a wrought-iron gazebo covered in flowers. Among the guests was actor Bradley Cooper.

Dinner was served family style on rustic farmhouse tables in a tent with wood floors and wrought iron chandeliers.

"My Italian family still eats Sunday dinner together every week," said Milano. "We wanted to capture the same feeling."

METRO NEWS SERVICES

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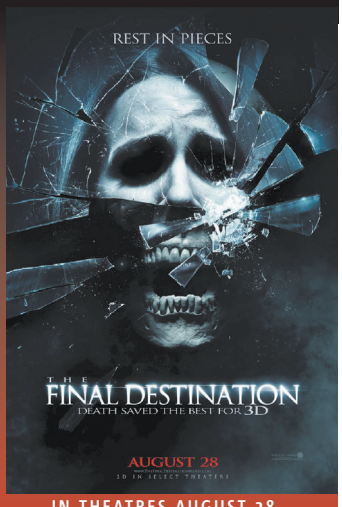

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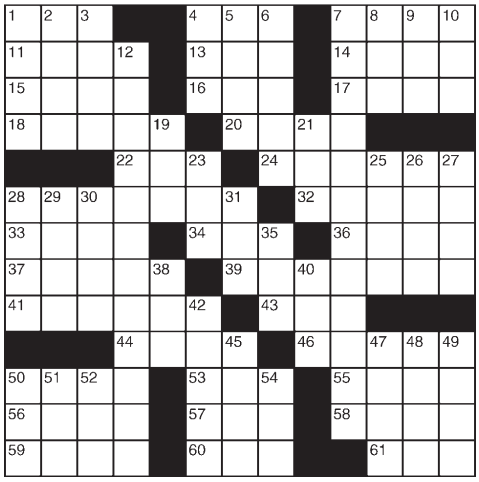


ACROSS

1 Trophy room, maybe
4 Recede
7 Bloke
11 Oil cartel
13 The Red or the Black
14 Inauguration recitation
15 "Arrivederci"
16 Faux —
17 Secondhand
18 Wash the pots
20 Potter's oven
22 Pinch
24 Its capital is Riga
28 Twisted treat
32 Existence
33 Ireland
34 Talk on and on
36 Get up
37 Blazing
39 Round pegs in square holes
41 "Am I my brother's —?"
43 Sock part
44 Related (to)
46 Shrivel
50 Unite
53 Gripe repeatedly
55 Frat party garb
56 Reed instrument
57 Hot tub
58 Break suddenly
59 Traps
60 Conger, for one
61 Mag. staffers

DOWN

1 Medics
2 Grand tale
3 In the vicinity
4 Kreskin's claim
5 Duck's prominence
6 Pesto ingredient
7 Makes money?
8 Owns
9 Noshed
10 Third degree?
12 Bedspreads
19 Occupation, for short
21 Science room
23 Mrs. Al Bundy
25 Henry —
26 "Meet Me — Louis"
27 Quite some time
28 Pinnacle
29 Widespread
30 Ontario neighbour
31 Flee from a crime scene
35 Morsel
38 "A mouse!"
40 Boar's mate
42 Clean the suds off
45 Back of the neck
47 Region
48 "Zounds!"
49 Siestas
50 Trot
51 Japanese sash
52 Charged particle
54 8 pts.

Sudoku

For more/less challenging Sudoku puzzles, visit metronews.ca

HOW TO PLAY: Digits 1 through 9 will appear once in each zone — one zone is an outlined 3x3 grid within the larger puzzle grid. There are nine zones in the puzzle. Do not enter a digit into a box if it already appears elsewhere in the same zone, row across or column down the entire puzzle.

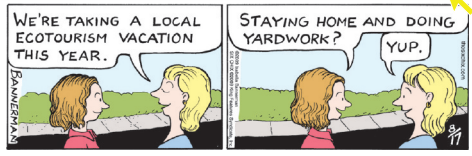
7			8		4			1
	2		5		6		9	
		6				3		
		2	3		1	9		
6								5
		8	6		5	7		
		5				1		
	8		9		3		2	
4			1		7			3

PREVIOUS DAY'S CROSSWORD AND SUDOKU ANSWERS:

2	7	6	4	8	1	5	9	3
3	5	8	7	2	9	6	4	1
9	4	1	5	3	6	2	7	8
5	3	4	2	6	7	1	8	9
8	2	9	1	4	3	7	6	5
1	6	7	8	9	5	4	3	2
4	1	3	9	7	2	8	5	6
7	9	5	6	1	8	3	2	4
6	8	2	3	5	4	9	1	7

On the web

For more games and 60 additional daily cartoon strips, visit metronews.ca



Metro Recipe of the Day

Three-Cheese Potato Soufflé

INGREDIENTS:

4 cups (1 l) mashed potatoes (without added milk and butter)
1 cup (250 ml) skim milk
1 cup (250 ml) shredded cheddar cheese
2/3 cup (150 ml) shredded Swiss cheese
1/3 cup (75 ml) shredded Parmesan cheese
1/3 cup (75 ml) chopped scallions
1 small onion, chopped
1 1/4 tsp (6 ml) salt
1/4 tsp (1 ml) pepper
4 eggs, separated

METHOD:

1. In a large bowl, combine the potatoes, milk, cheeses, onions, salt and pepper. Beat egg yolks; stir into potato mixture.
2. In a small mixing bowl, beat egg whites until stiff peaks form; gently fold into potato mixture.
3. Transfer to a 2-qt. (2-l) soufflé dish coated with nonstick cooking spray. Bake, uncovered, at 375 F (190 C) for 40-45 minutes or until golden. Serve immediately.

SERVES 12

rd.ca

For nutritional information on this and other great recipes, go to rd.ca or check out Key Ingredients in this month's Reader's Digest, on newsstands now!

Horoscopes by Sally Brompton sallybrompton.com

For Sally's expanded daily and weekend horoscopes, visit metronews.ca

ARIES
MARCH 21-APRIL 20
You're no stranger to hard work and as of today you'll begin to enjoy the fruit of your labour. You'll also find it easier to work with difficult people.

TAURUS
APRIL 21-MAY 21
You'll experience one of those "Eureka!" moments today. Out of nowhere you'll see the pattern that you have somehow missed these past few weeks.

GEMINI
MAY 22-JUNE 21
You may have found it hard to confide in people recently but the cosmic picture is changing and you can explain to others what's worrying you and why.

CANCER
JUNE 22-JULY 22
Even if you can usually turn on the charm you may have found it hard recently to communicate feelings — but no more. Say what's on your mind today.

LEO
JULY 23-AUG 23
You owe someone a favour and if you go out of your way to make good on it today you'll discharge your debt and they may even end up owing you.

VIRGO
AUG 24-SEPT 22
You can now see things as they are. If you have been deceiving yourself as to the true nature of your situation the scales will fall from your eyes today.

LIBRA
SEPT 23-OCT 23
You may have been in the dark of late but as of today you will understand what has been going on and why you were kept out of the loop.

SCORPIO
OCT 24-NOV 22
It may have been hard to explain why you believe certain apparently illogical things, but as of today you'll find ways to rationalize your beliefs.

SAGITTARIUS
NOV 23-DEC 21
You have held back from letting certain people know what you think of them. Now you can tell them in no uncertain terms what your feelings are.

CAPRICORN
DEC 22-JAN 20
You rarely leave anything to chance and the cosmic setup means you'll know with absolute certainty that what you are doing is right and ethical.

AQUARIUS
JAN 21-FEB 18
If you are having second thoughts about a deal, you can still back out of it — now. After today you'll be expected to uphold your end of the pact.

PISCES
FEB 19-MARCH 20
Don't worry if it's been hard to get through to loved ones recently. Today's cosmic setup will help you find the words to unlock the emotional impasse.

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WORDY GURDY®

BY TRICKY RICKY KANE

Every answer is a rhyming pair of words (like FAT CAT and DOUBLE TROUBLE), and they will fit in the letter squares. The number after the definition tells you how many syllables in each word.

1. Lower a Wise piece into salsa (1)
2. Select hints to a puzzle (1)
3. Book leaf on rain-measuring device (1)
4. "NBA star Bryant, meet actor Maguire" (2)
5. Racehorse raiser's woods for chests (2)
6. Minister's showy fall flowers (2)
7. Inside scoop on a "High Noon" final duel (2)

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ANSWERS
1. DIP CHIP 2. CHOOSE CLUES 3. GAUGE PAGE 4. ROBE TOBEY
5. BREEDERS CEDARS 6. PASTORS ASTERS 7. SHOWDOWN LOWDOWN

8-17-09

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